

# Rep. Wu meets with labor, says he'll oppose Korea FTA

A teary-eyed U.S. Rep. David Wu thanked organized labor for standing with him as he fends off accusations that he isn't mentally fit to serve in office.

"It is absolutely wonderful to be among friends," said Wu, following a rousing standing ovation from some 50 union leaders and retirees attending a political breakfast March 22 hosted by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

The seven-term labor-endorsed Democrat from Oregon's 1st District has been under fire from the media for erratic behavior prior to his re-election last November that resulted in six long-time high-level staffers leaving. Public outbursts and bizarre e-mails to staff raised questions about his mental health, and reports of possible prescription drug and/or alcohol abuse surfaced. Several newspapers say he is not fit to hold office and have called for his resignation.

Wu, 55, has told the media repeatedly that 2010 was a uniquely stressful time for him as he dealt with a tough re-election campaign, difficult divorce proceedings, taking sole custody of his two children, and caring for his elderly mother. He emphatically denies a drug or alcohol problem, but acknowledged having a bad reaction to diazepam and Ambien in the past. He said he regrets things he said or the way he acted that resulted in staff quitting, and admits to seeking professional help, although he won't specify for what.

"It is appropriate, it's very appropriate for me to apologize for some of the things that were said and done last October," Wu told the labor audience. "I've taken full responsibility for it, and I still do. It was a loud wakeup call when I had some staff departures."

NOLC First Vice President Lynn Lehrbach of the Teamsters Union praised Wu for his perseverance. "You've stood up to it well. You answered to your constituency and the public. And as you've stood with us, we're going to stand with you," he said.

Wu said it is an important time — "for all of us. You have seen labor under assault. It is shocking that it should happen in Wisconsin and Ohio, two



Oregon's 1st District Congressman David Wu chats with Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain during a breakfast meeting March 22 with approximately 50 union leaders and retirees. The breakfast was hosted by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

places where labor had some of their most successful early battles. Let me tell you, brothers and sisters, I know what it's like to be under assault. And we fight back. And friends stand with friends."

Wu said contrary to media reports, he continues to do the work of the people — both in Oregon and in Washington, D.C. He has no intention of resigning.

"I'm in fine fiddle," he said. You all have seen me before — and you see me today, and rarely have I been feeling as good as I do today."

Wu said his main objective in Congress is helping create jobs.

He announced for the first time his opposition to the proposed Korean Free Trade Agreement, calling it a "job destroyer." Wu said the pact endorsed by the Obama Administration doesn't have a human rights component that takes into account labor and environmental rights.

Wu supports building the Columbia River Crossing. He pointed out that he was the only congressman from Oregon to back a \$25 million rebuild of Pioneer Courthouse, which "generated immediate high-wage jobs." Wu supports a tsunami readiness bill that would reset building codes nationwide, resulting in thousands of jobs rebuilding highways and buildings to withstand a major earthquake and tsunami.

He opposed HR 1, which eliminated funding for the Workforce Investment

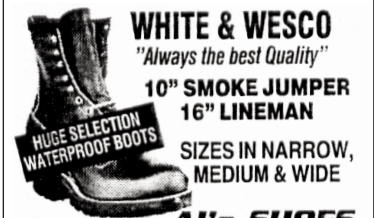
Act and other job training programs. The zeroing out of funding was part of the Republican leadership's \$60 billion in spending cuts through the remainder of the federal fiscal year.

Another program the GOP targeted for defunding is National Public Radio. "That is not going to happen," Wu said.

Following an emergency session of the House Rules Committee, the U.S. House on March 17 voted mostly along party lines to prevent NPR from receiving federal funds of any kind. Wu said the bill will never make it out of the U.S. Senate or past President Obama's veto pen.

Wu said he plans to hold a public forum during the next Congressional recess later this month.

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### Tuesday, April 19th at 7:00pm

**Cash donations will be accepted for the Labor's Community Service Agency**

**Light buffet will be served beginning at 6:30pm**

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